Technology for Operation of Freight Services

3556. SHRI VIREN J. SHAH: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) what is thestatus ondevelopment of technology foroperationof 4500 ft. freight services atdoublethe existing speed; and

(b) whether any plan has been formulated for bulk movement of fertilizers from Hazira to consuming centres in the North ?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES) : (a) Hased on a pilot study undertaken, the technology and other inputs necessary to achieve the objective of doubling the average speed of 4500 ft. freight trains have been identified and necessary follow-Up action is being initiated.

(b) No, Sir.

Forcible Eviction and Charging of Market Rent from Retd. Senior Officer

3557. PROF. SOURENDRA BHATTACHARJEE : Will the Minister of URBAN DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Directorate of Estates is pursuing cases or realisation of alleged market rents against some of retired senior •officers of Government of India and others who had retained their respective bunga lows on the orders of the Government in 1989 or performing important Govern ment duties assigned to them after re tirement;

(b) whether some of those who re tained their house* for the purpose of Government duties and on the orders of the then Government in 1989 were forci bly evicted by a section of officials in the Directorate to defy the Government orders;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) what further action is proposed to be taken against those who had defied Government orders of 1989?

THE MINISTER OF URBAN DEVE LOPMENT (SHRIMURASOLI MARAN : (a) to (d). The information is being collected and will be laid on the "able of the Sabha.

School for Physically Handicapped

3558. SHRI JAGADISH JANI: Will the Minister of WELFARE be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government have a proposal to set up special schools in different States to provide education to the physically handicapped children;

(b) if so, what is the number of such schools which are proposed to be funded by Government in Orissa;

(c) whether any such school is proposed to be set up in the tribal areas; and

(d) if so, the details thereof ?

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR AND WELFARE (SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN) : (a) to (d) The information is being collected and will be laid down on the Table of the House as soon as possible.

'DHOBI' as a Scheduled Caste

3559. MISS SAROJ KHAPARDE: Will the Minister of WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether 'Dhobi* community has been included in the list of Scheduled Castes in all the States and Union Terri tories;

(b) whether this Caste has been excluded from the list in the State of Maharashtra;

(c) if so, the reason therefor; and

(d) the action proposed to be taken to restore the reservation facilities to the members of this Caste ?

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR AND WELFARE (SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN) (a) Dhobis have been included in the lists of Scheduled Castes in 13 States and one Union Territory.

(b) Dhobis have not been included in the list of Scheduled Castes in Maharashtra.

(c) The social condition of a cast* varies from State to State and even areas within a State.

(d) In view of the provisions of Article 341 of the Constitution, Scheduled Castes are specified in relation to a particular State only and not on all India basis.

Production of Isabgol

3560. SHRI KRISHAN LAL SHARMA Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that 'Isabgol also known as blea-seed has instant ac ceptability in foreign countries; and

(b) if so the steps Government have taken to boost its cultivation to meet foreign demand thereof ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND COOPERATION IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI NITISH KUMAR : (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. India is a monopoly exporter of 'Isabgol'. The production of 'Isabgol' in the country is more than the domestic demand. In view of the excess production and less domestic demand, production of 'Isabgol' is not being encouraged. Government of India implemented Market Intervention Scheme for 'Isabgol' during March 1990 to june 1990 and a total quantity of 2156 M.T. of Isabgol @ Rs. 1100/- per quintal was procured which helped in stabilising the prices of 'Isabgol' in Gujarat.

On-going Railway Projects in Himachal Pradesh

3561. SHRI KRISHAN LAL SHARMA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) The names of the on-going railway projects as at present in Himachal Pradesh together with the dates of their origin;

(b) how many of them relate to laying of new track doubling and extension of tracks;

(c) the handicaps in the execution of these projects;

(d) whether any targets have been fixed for their completion; and

(e) the steps being taken to extend railway -track from Kalka to Parwanoo and by when it is likely to be completed ?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES) : (a) Nangal Dam-Talwara new line and taking over of siding from Talwara to Mukerian (84+29 Km) — 1981-82.
(b) New BG line—one
Doubling—NIL
Extension of track—NIL

(c) Delay in the State Government handing over land at reasonable cost as also constraint of resources.

(d) No Sir.

(e) On the advice of the State Government the work of extension of line from Kalka upto Parwanoo was dropped.

Organisation of consumer awareness Programmes in rural areas

3562. SHRI KRISHAN LAL SHARMA: Will the Minister of FOOD AND CIVIL SUPPLIES be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government are of the opinion that there is a need to organize consumer awareness programme in the rural areas of the country; and

(b) if so the steps being taken to boost the programme in the rural areas of the country ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FOOD AND CIVIL SUPPLIES (SHRI RAM PUJAN PATEL) : (a) Yes Sir.

(b) Various steps taken by the Government under Consumer Awareness Programme aim at generating awareness amongst urban as well as rural consumers. The formation of consumer organisations in the rural and urban areas is being encouraged. In order to strengthen them the Government has recently started a scheme of giving financial assistance and training-to consumer organisations. It has published a number of booklets and brochures which are being distributed free of cost. Doordarshan is telecasting a fortnightly programme 'Sanrakshan Upbhokta Ka In addition the Government has also started a weekly programme entitled 'Apne Adhikar' on 28 commercial broadcaisting stations of AIR. It has prepared a few video quickies and documentaries in the field of Consumer Protection.